



Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
Media and Communications Division

For Immediate Release

May 4, 2018

CONTACT: Ryan Ducharme

602-771-1092

Ryan.ducharme@asdb.az.gov

All Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Legislative Funding Requests Passed with Overwhelming Support

TEACHERS RECEIVE 20% PAY RAISE, TEACHERS GRANTED EQUAL FUNDING STATUS TO OTHER PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM RECEIVES FUNDING CRITICAL TO FAMILIES



Phoenix, AZ, May 4, 2018 –[Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind \(ASDB\)](http://www.asdb.az.gov) Superintendent Annette Reichman proudly announced that all of ASDB's Fiscal Year 2018-19 legislative funding requests were overwhelmingly passed by the legislature and signed into law by Governor Ducey. In appreciation for ASDB's many supporters, Superintendent Reichman wrote the following letter expressing her heartfelt appreciation to ASDB's many advocates, partners and stakeholders:

-More-

All of us within the ASDB community work hard every day to provide the best education and supports, as well as safe and clean environments, for all of our students. And, until now, our work was seemingly unnoticed and unappreciated by others in our communities.

That changed yesterday.

I am truly awed, excited and privileged to announce that ASDB will be receiving all of the funding the agency has requested from the Governor's Office and the state legislature!

Specifically, the following was accomplished:

- Education budget victories – roughly \$2.5 million in additional funding for ASDB by 2021.
 - **Our teachers will receive a long-overdue pay raise** as part of the 20% by 2020 initiative. We successfully fought to make sure ASDB teachers were included.
 - In addition to teacher salaries, ASDB will get additional funding for its programs and operations.
 - Details on how this money is to be distributed will follow in a future message once we've had an opportunity to analyze all the budget details.
- **With the support of the entire ASDB community**—parents, students, employees, partner organizations and legislators—**HB2108 is now law.**
 - Now, and going forward, ASDB teachers will, automatically, receive the same salary increases that other public school teachers are entitled to when the state appropriates more money for teacher compensation, including last year's teacher salary increases.
- The three-year effort to increase resources for ASDB's Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) program resulted in over \$2 million in new funding!
 - \$1.6 million recurring yearly appropriation to pay for up to 21 new teachers.
 - \$470 thousand one-time allocation to purchase vehicles for the new ECFE teachers.

These amazing successes are the direct result of the collaboration and leadership of many ASDB staff and external partners.

ASDB teachers and staff actively supported efforts to increase funding for public education. Members of the greater ASDB community also contributed to these successes on behalf of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Visually Impaired and Deafblind children/students that we educate. Parents, staff, community leaders, partnering agencies, the ASDB Board and government leaders supported our causes and funding initiatives.

Governor Ducey supported and prioritized ASDB's students, families and staff, honoring his commitment to support ASDB's many legislative funding and teacher equity initiatives. Representatives like Paul Boyer and Maria Syms sponsored key legislation on behalf of ASDB, and nearly every single legislator voiced their support for ASDB and its mission through both their statements and votes of support.

Partners like Deaf and Blind community members and ECFE leaders, parents and teachers presented and testified on behalf of HB2022. Every division in ASDB had a significant role to play in these agency successes – Education, Government Relations, Media and Communications, Business Services, Human Resources, Operations and Information Technology.

-More-

Thank you all – I truly appreciate each of your contributions and support of the legislative outreach effort. I will be reaching out to many of you individually.

For now, I want to specifically thank the following individual for his extraordinary time and efforts:

- ❖ State Representative Paul Boyer, ASDB's inaugural recipient of the ASDB Axios Award: Champion of Deaf and Blind Children, state house education chairman and teacher. He truly is our hero. Legislator Boyer has tirelessly advocated on behalf of ASDB and its children for years. He wrote and was the prime sponsor of both HB2022 and HB2108. He opened up doors we could not, and many we didn't even know existed. He provided invaluable guidance, arranged important meetings, whipped up votes and support and made ASDB his top legislative priority. For his efforts and successes on our behalf, we are forever grateful.

Today is the day to celebrate the important legislative funding victories that, together, we accomplished.

Thank you for your tireless dedication and commitment to high quality education and supports for the thousands of children and students that we serve.

Sincerely,



Annette Reichman
Superintendent
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

The [Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind \(ASDB\)](#) was founded in 1912 – the year of Arizona's statehood. ASDB serves over 2,000 children who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard-of-hearing, multisensory disabled or deafblind from birth to age 21. ASDB operates two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind, a statewide birth-to-three early childhood and family education program and five regional cooperatives. ASDB is dedicated to empowering young children and students with the educational opportunities necessary to succeed in college, career and life. For more information, contact Ryan Ducharme at ryan.ducharme@asdb.az.gov or 602-771-1092.

###